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A

DISSERTATION

UPON

The Account suppos'd to have been
given of JESUS CHRIST by
Josephus.



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A
DISSERTATION
UPON
THE ACCOUNT
Suppos'd to have been given
OF
JESUS CHRIST
BY
JOSEPHUS,

Being an attempt to shew that this celebrated Passage, some slight corruptions only excepted, may reasonably be esteem'd genuine.

Συγκαταστήμεν μὲν πως ταῖς ὡς ἀδούχαις δυνάμεσι,
ὡς Ἰησοῦς ἐποίησεν, ἐν αἷς τὰς πολλὰς ἐποίησεν ἀγα-
θῶν αὐτῷ &c. *Orig. contra Cels. L. I. p. 30.*

O X F O R D,

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DISSEMINATION
THE ACCOUNT
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THE author of this Dissertation desires the reader to look upon it merely as a cursory and conjectural Essay towards reconciling in some measure the opposite opinions that have been entertain'd concerning a very perplex'd and controverted affair. With this view he has endeavour'd to consider the subject in a new light, which, if tolerably *plausible*, (for he pretends to nothing farther upon a point of this nature) will need no apology ; and if not, will receive little benefit from any thing that can be offer'd in excuse for it. He only begs leave therefore to observe, that, though what is here advanc'd should be deem'd quite unsatisfactory, the authority of those
learned

learned critics who have not scrupled to defend this celebrated passage even as it stands at present, must, he hopes, be sufficient to screen him from the heavy and unpopular imputation of credulity with regard to it.

Page. 29. Lin. 1. dele ~~it~~.

DISSERTATION

UPON

The Account suppos'd to have been
given of JESUS CHRIST by
Josephus.

THERE are few passages extant in
any ancient author, which have been
more frequently, or perhaps with
greater shew of reason, the subject of debate,
than the account suppos'd to be given of Christ
by Josephus in the eighteenth book of his
Antiquities¹. After having appear'd with great

¹ Πιστιν δὲ κατὰ τὸν τῶν χρόνων Ἰησοῦ, σφίσι ἀντὶ, ἔχει
ἀποδοῦναι αὐτὸν λίαν καὶ. ὅτι καὶ περιέχει ἱστορίαν πικρὰν, διδασκαλίαν
ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐκείνων καὶ πολλὰς μὲν Ἰουδαίας, πολλὰς
δὲ καὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐκτείνει. ὁ Χριστὸς ὅστις ἦ. καὶ αὐτὸν ἐκείνη τῶν
ἀνθρώπων πρὸς ἡμῖν, πικρὰ ἐκτείνει. Πολύτα, ἐκ ἐκεί-
νων οἷσι ἀντὶ [αὐτοῦ] ἀρπαγέντες. ἰσχυρὰ καὶ αὐτοῖς τρέχει ἔχον
ἀμείνων πάλιν ζῶν, τῶν θάνατον ἀποφύγων ταῦτά τι καὶ ἄλλα μορία ἡ-
μῶντα εὖ αὐτῷ ἀρκεῖται. ὡς ἐπὶ οὖν [alii ὡς πρὸς] τῶν Χριστιανῶν
ἔστι τῶνδε ἀνομομαρτῶν ἐκ ἐπίλειπτον τὸ φύλον. Ed. Haverc. v. 1.
p. 876, 877.

credit for some ages together, not only in all the manuscripts and the old Latin version of that writer, but in the works of ecclesiastical historians and defenders of Christianity¹; it began not long after the revival of letters to meet with a very different reception. Suspicions were entertain'd of it²; and arguments, drawn from the sentiments, language, and other circumstances, appear'd in support of them; till at length it has been exploded by some of the greatest critics, as one of those idle and senseless forgeries, which, tho' they may amuse the world for a time, have the misfortune, when thoroughly examin'd, to carry their own confutation with them.

Not that there have been wanting men of considerable abilities to engage in it's defence. Various schemes have been tried to obviate the several difficulties attending it. Almost every different advocate has invented a different method of reconciling this extraordinary account of Christ with the sentiments of it's suppos'd

¹ Eusebius, Jerom, Isidore, Sozomen, and several others, concerning whom and various particulars incidentally mention'd in this treatise, see the authors enumerated by Fabricius in his *Biblioth. Græc. L. 4. c. 6.* and especially those re-publish'd by Havercamp in his edition of Josephus.

² By Hubert Gifanius an eminent Lawyer, and Luke Oslander a Lutheran Divine, about the middle of the sixteenth century.

author.

author. Some have endeavour'd to exhibit the character of Josephus in a new light¹: reasons have been assign'd by others, which might induce him to deviate in this particular from his general character²: all of them jointly insisting on the high improbability of his silence with regard to a person of his own nation, who had so lately made a most eminent figure in it, and on the manifest impropriety of hastily setting aside such a celebrated testimony in favour of Christianity, when supported by a degree of external evidence, which, they think, few passages in any ancient prophane author can pretend to.

But what if in the heat of the debate both parties should have neglected the most easy method of settling it? Would not an indifferent person reasonably expect, that in a case of this

¹ As being half a Christian. So Spencer, Tillemont, Daubuz, Hudson.

² To please some of the Gens Flavia, who were Christians. Or out of respect to his patron Epaphroditus, suppos'd to be the same with Epaphroditus the freed-man of Nero, suppos'd to be the Epaphroditus mention'd by St. Paul, and consequently suppos'd to be a Christian. *Daubuz*. Or lastly, for reasons of state, viz. to cure Domitian of his fright at a future Jewish Messiah, by assuring him, that Jesus who had been dead and buried many years ago, and from whom he could apprehend no danger, was really the person of whom their prophets had spoken under that character. *Telles ont été visiblement les vûes de l'historien &c. Martin*, Dissert. upon this subject, p. 340.

nature the passage in question should have been minutely and fairly examin'd; that, instead of endeavouring to find out imaginary reasons for making Josephus talk like a Christian, the utmost care should have been taken to guard against unwarily affixing Christian ideas to his expressions¹; and lastly, in order to prevent our being oblig'd to reject good positive evidence on the one hand, or to swallow an apparent ab-

¹ Lambecius cannot indeed be accus'd of having been wanting in this particular. See his *Bibl. Vind. T. 8. sub init.* And thus far this learned critic seems to have proceeded upon a right principle. But, having unfortunately attempted an impossibility, viz. to shew that Josephus, though consider'd as a Jew, might yet consistently with this character be suppos'd to have written the whole paragraph as it stands at present, he has been oblig'd to have recourse to a very unnatural and extravagant hypothesis. He conceives that the historian has not only studiously affected to express himself as ambiguously as possible, but to borrow likewise his account of Jesus from the three Gospels which were then publicly extant; and that those parts of it which seem to speak too plainly and strongly in favour of our religion, are to be consider'd as ironical, or at least, not as facts asserted by Josephus, but merely as the Christian traditions which he simply mentions, without believing them. But is it probable that a grave historian should in so short an account give us one moment his own sentiments, and the next those of persons who entirely differ'd from him, without affording us any criterion whereby we might easily distinguish the one from the other? Is it not much more natural to suppose, that, if some parts of this passage have (as Lambecius has very justly remark'd) visibly the air of a Jewish composition, the appearances to the contrary in one or two sentences of it may rather be owing to some slight corruptions in them?

furdity

furdity on the other, that the assistance of literal criticism should have been call'd in, to try at least an innocent experiment, whether a word or two, which may have unfortunately crept into the text, have not given a wrong turn to the whole passage, and been the principal occasion of the dispute concerning it?

This was certainly the most natural method of proceeding in the case before us. And yet such have been the prejudices on both sides, that it has been generally overlook'd. The admirers of this paragraph seem to have been too fond of it to see any thing amiss in it. And most of those who have declar'd against it, have in return condemn'd it, as it were, at first sight, without suffering themselves to imagine, that it could in any respect deserve a more attentive and particular examination. Some^e indeed, and those persons of eminent learning^e, appear to have thought differently of it. But, if I mistake not, they have contented themselves with briefly excepting to a clause or two, which they conceive to have been inserted by Christian hands, and with observing, that, if these were remov'd, the remaining parts might reasonably be esteem'd genuine.

1 Bishop Mountague, Isaac Vossius, Steph. le Moyne, Reland &c.

The design of these papers is to proceed somewhat farther; to shew that, if only two slight and easy emendations may be admitted, and the false colour, which the mistakes here suppos'd have thrown upon the whole, be taken off, the account will appear perfectly suitable to the place in which it stands, and no less agreeable to the sentiments, language, design, and other circumstances of it's reputed author.

But I can easily foresee many strong prejudices necessarily arising in the minds of those who have accusom'd themselves to consider this passage as undoubtedly spurious. They will be apt to look upon it as impossible to execute what is here propos'd, without having recourse to some such unnatural expedients as are made use of by the persons who have hitherto appear'd in it's defence. It may be proper therefore briefly to premise, in what light I consider the section itself, and the person to whom it is attributed. How far I am right in my notion of either, will more fully appear hereafter.

First then, I consider the account itself as a mere simple narrative, in which there is not a sentence, that, when properly read and understood, betrays the writer to have had any suspicion that Jesus was the Messiah, or even a teacher

teacher sent from God. On the other hand, some expressions plainly imply him to have been persuaded of the contrary. And the whole, taken together, seems to be the composition of a person, perfectly satisfied that the Christian scheme could not be true, astonish'd however at some amazing appearances in it's favour, but artfully eluding the force of them, avoiding to enter into the merits of the affair, and yet affecting to give a seemingly candid and plausible account of it's original.

Nor will any one who has sufficiently examin'd the life and writings of Josephus, look upon such an account as inconsistent with his situation and character. He was indeed a believer of the law of Moses, and had in general adher'd to the sect of the Pharisees. But whoever therefore expects to meet with in his works the same blind and intemperate zeal, haughtiness of temper, and outrageous malice, which then so commonly prevail'd among the Jews, and were more particularly the distinguishing characteristics of the sect above-mention'd, will, upon the slightest perusal of them, find himself agreeably mistaken. Our author every where appears in a very different light. A spirit directly opposite was the natural result of his

his extensive observation and experience, and no less necessary to the very design of his history. His life, one of the most extraordinary for what he had both seen and undergone, had given him as singular a complexion. The principal ingredients of which, as far as we can judge of it from his writings, were a warm, and sometimes seemingly enthusiastic, imagination, but corrected by a plausible mixture of calmness and dissimulation, and, even in matters of religion, frequently blended with an air of scepticism and indifference.

Such was the person, who undertook the great employment of recommending the history and antiquities of his nation to the acquaintance of the Heathen world. In the latter part of which, after mentioning some commotions that had happen'd at Jerusalem under Pilate's administration, and which he observes were soon appeas'd, he proceeds to give an account of another, much more singular in it's nature, and, as he remarks, more lasting in it's consequences.

Γίνετα δὲ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον Ἰησοῦς τις¹,

¹ Tan. Faber objects to the pronoun τις as only applicable to some inconsiderable person, and brings it as a proof of the stupidity of the impostor, for inconsistently introducing one whom he soon after so highly extolls, in this slighting manner, *De Test. Flavian. Ep. 30.* But the word is universally wanting, except in the

αφ' ου αὐτος, ὅς ἐστι ἀνδρῶν ἀντὶς λέγων ἡγή·. *But about this time appears one Jesus, a man of great abi-*

the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius. It cannot therefore, as the defenders of this passage observe, who have for this reason rejected it, fairly be urg'd as an objection. I must however beg leave to dissent in some measure from both parties upon this occasion; my notion of this account being very different from that of those who have hitherto defended it. Faber, as Daubuz has observ'd, is notoriously mistaken. Josephus frequently introduces prophets and other eminent men in this manner. And *Ιησοῦς ΤΙΣ*, when compar'd with what I shall say hereafter upon this paragraph, and particularly upon the clause, *Ο Χριστὸς ἦν*, will appear to have a peculiar propriety in it. The particle was probably rejected by Christian transcribers on account of the seeming inconsistency which Faber objects to it.

1 The true meaning of the word *αφ' ου*, as it is here applied to Jesus, being in some measure the key to the whole sentence, I must desire the reader to guard against one essential mistake concerning it, viz. associating those ideas of *approbation*, *esteem*, and *reverence*, which the words *sapientia* and *wisdom* usually excite in us. For the not attending to this particular, obvious as it is, seems to have been one of the principal occasions of the prejudices which have been so generally entertain'd against the subsequent observation. "Josephus, it is said, expresses at first setting out a greater degree of *reverence* and *esteem* for Jesus, than could well have been expected from a *Jew*, in styling him a *wise* man. This however might perhaps possibly have proceeded from a writer of his known candour and observation, who could not but be sensible of a peculiar dignity of character in the person whom he is describing: But, that not content with so doing, he should rise still higher, and intermix a degree of religious adoration, is perfectly incredible, and consequently shews the whole to be the work of some Christian impostor." And yet upon what is this noble climax, which has been an admirable subject of declamation, principally founded? Upon the wrong association above-

lities, if indeed he may properly be stil'd a mere Man, or in other words, if indeed there was not

mention'd. For every one who is at all conversant with the Greek tongue, must know that the words *επιε* and *επιε* are in their most common acceptation a mere compliment to the art, *cunning*, or *abilities* of a person, denoting only *επε* *επε*, as Aristotle *Eth. Nicom.* L. 6. c. 7. observes, and applicable even to every skilful artificer, without implying the least *esteem* or *regard* for the whole of his character. And whoever reads Josephus, will find, that he is very impartial in paying this compliment to the *able* men of all denominations, whatever he may think of them in other respects. It is perhaps scarce worth mentioning, that the learned Daubuz, who has taken great pains to shew every expression in this paragraph to be the genuine language of our historian, is mistaken in observing, that, though the word *επε* is usually added by him to the character given of persons, it is in no other place join'd with *επε*. Daniel, on account of his skill in interpreting dreams, is by Belshazzar's grandmother stil'd *επε* *επε* &c. Ed. Haverc. v. 1. p. 539.

2 If (as Eusebius, who was not likely to detract from the importance of this passage, seems to have understood it, Dem. Evang. p. 124.) *he is not rather to be consider'd as εβουλη* *εβουλη* *εβουλη* *εβουλη*. But Isaac Vossius and Ittigius are for striking out this whole clause. And in like manner Reland, "At Moses ipsam sepe εβουλη nuncupat. An Christum Mose ipsi prætulit? Sunt ab aliena manu"---- Now (not to mention that even the unbelieving Egyptians according to our author, *Contra Apion.* L. 1. p. 464. think Moses εβουλη *εβουλη* *εβουλη* *εβουλη* and why might not he in his astonishment at the wonderful works of Jesus drop an hasty and obscure intimation of the like kind with regard to *him*?) not to insist, I say on this, because I am satisfied Josephus really means no such thing; let us see how the case stands in his opinion between Moses and Jesus. Both, he knew, had been *εβουλη* *εβουλη* *εβουλη* *εβουλη*, and in consequence of this had made a surprizing figure in the world. The point however was clear

something more than human in him. There is evidently nothing exceptionable in the former part of this sentence. Nor could any objection have reasonably been made to the latter, if some of it's admirers had not given it a Chri-

clear with regard to the former. He was an acknowledg'd prophet immediately invest'd with an extraordinary power by God. But it was as clear, he thought, from the seemingly opposite doctrines of Jesus and his pretensions to the title of the Messiah, that *this* he could not be. Setting then *this* aside, there remain only two other possible suppositions. The *ἡγεμονία* which he was known to have perform'd, must have been the result either of human *wisdom*, or of *some* supernatural interposition. The author, to shew how little he is prejudic'd in favour of Jesus, inclines at first to the former. But he is unable to settle there, and in spite of himself vibrates, as it were, mechanically towards the latter. To which then of the persons above-mention'd is the preference here given?—In short, this passage is not, as many seem to imagine, an affected jingle upon the word *ἀντὶ*, or an idle rhetorical amplification, but the natural effect of real perplexity, the last clause of a simple disjunctive proposition, extorted by mere notoriety of fact, and express'd with as much conciseness and hesitation as possible. It is a kind of half-begotten sentiment, which the author seems to have had no inclination to cherish or improve.

3 FAS est. So the old translators, fond of this noble acquisition from a Jewish adversary, and willing to make as much of it as they could, have translated it; and so, which is more to be wonder'd at, it has continued in most of the versions to this day. But Josephus had no such *religious* idea in his mind. The word is not *ἡγεμονία* or *ἡγεμονία*, which a Christian, supposing him to have written this account, would probably have us'd, but *ἡγεμονία*, an expression denoting the lowest kind of *fitness*, and deriving it's notion from the idea of *usefulness* or *expediency*. It only means, If he may properly be stiled a mere man.

stian turn, in order, as it were, to oblige the critics with an opportunity of ridiculing it. And accordingly Faber very naturally asks, "Quid, quæso, aliud innuere vult, nisi Jesum Dominum esse Deum? In quo graviter peccat hic pius impostor"—Agreed on all hands, if this be the meaning. But the real author of this sentence little dreamt of being thus misunderstood, whilst instead of endeavouring to raise the character of Jesus, he was studying to depress it. Josephus was as much *inclin'd* to think him a *mere man*, as any modern unbeliever. There is however this remarkable and necessary difference between them. The latter, reading with a calm insensibility, or a mixture of idle levity, the amazing accounts given of one Jesus, who is said to have liv'd in a distant country above seventeen hundred years ago, can with great sufficiency pronounce him to have been at most a *σοφὸν ἄνδρα*, an artful cunning man; or thinking, that he has paid him too great a compliment in so doing, drop a hint, that he might perhaps have been only a dreaming enthusiast. But Josephus, though, from his Jewish notions of the Messiah, he was satisfied that Jesus could not be the person, and consequently, as he pretended to that high character, not even a teacher sent from God, was how-
ever

ever incapable of talking at this idle rate. Born and bred at Jerusalem, whilst the astonishing wonders that Jesus had done in his life time, were fresh in the minds of every one, and the reality of them allow'd on all hands, and yet endeavouring to elude the force of them, he has at first recourse to human *επιστήμη* or *natural magic*, concerning the extent of which the Jews in general entertain'd a very high opinion, which the knowledge Josephus had of the famous wonder-working *επιστήμη* of the Heathen world, was not likely to have lessen'd, and to which art he has elsewhere expressly ascrib'd the power of casting out devils ¹. But an involuntary consciousness immediately arises, how inadequate this solution is. It acts so strongly upon his imagination that he is unable to stifle it entirely. Whilst the conciseness, hesitation, and ambiguity of expression, so visible in this and other parts of the relation ², though they have given Christian transcribers the greater scope to mistake and corrupt it, are the

¹ See v. 1. p. 420. and v. 2. p. 417.

² *Ut frigidus! ut laxus! hæret, sudat, balbutit, neque proficit hilum. Faber.* There is some truth, how unwilling soever the admirers of this paragraph may be to allow it, in this observation. But the critic is perhaps too hasty in his conclusion. The most fluent orators, when oblig'd to touch upon a puzzling, ticklish, disagreeable subject, are very apt to talk in this manner.

genuine

genuine language of a writer, touching gently upon a subject too extraordinary and notorious to be quite pass'd over in silence, avoiding to enter into particulars, and endeavouring to give his Heathen readers a seemingly candid and plausible account of the affair in general.

A comparison between the conduct of the Pharisees towards our Saviour and that of Josephus in the case before us, will farther illustrate and confirm what is here laid down. His miracles were too numerous and signal to be denied; whilst his doctrine and pretensions were too opposite to their prejudices to be admitted upon any evidence whatever. Zealous therefore for the law of Moses and the Jewish constitution, to which they esteem'd him a very dangerous enemy, they entertain the most shocking opinion of him; and, to blacken him the more effectually with the multitude, vent it in the most outrageous terms, *This fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the Devils.* But the situation of Josephus, and, as has been observ'd, his natural temper were perfectly different. This polite writer inwardly perhaps entertain'd much the same opinion of Jesus that they did; but, as he is only giving his Heathen readers a superficial account of him, he has with great propriety varied

varied from them in his expression*. He had seen the ruin of his country brought about by the madness of those hot-headed zealots, in which the Christians were so far from having had any concern, that they were in a most extraordinary manner exempted from that general desolation. They had constantly concurr'd with him in preaching up the singular doctrine of a quiet submission to the Roman government, which he had made it the great business of his life to inculcate, and for which he stood expos'd to the rage and malice of his countrymen in common with them. Consider him moreover as concern'd for the honour and welfare of his nation; and the character here

* An historian of tolerable sense or candour, whatever he inwardly thinks of a controverted affair, seldom uses the same virulent language which may have fallen from zealous persons warmly engag'd in the original dispute. Nor was Josephus a stranger to the *Acquiescence* of the polite writers of antiquity. His usual cunning and address must likewise have forsaken him, had he industriously awaken'd in his Hesthen readers one of their greatest prejudices against his countrymen, by reminding them of the Jewish doctrine, that every thing thought to be supernatural in all the religions of the world but their own, was owing to the interposition of evil Demons.

2 I mention this circumstance, because it seems to be sometimes too much overlook'd. And yet a moderate attention to his history will shew that it is usually uppermost in his thoughts. Indeed his principal design in writing the antiquities of his nation was to rescue it from the contempt into which it was then almost universally

given of Jesus will be no less pertinent. For how impolitic must it have been in him to have vented his spleen, supposing he had any, against the Christians, who were at that time generally look'd upon by the Heathen merely as a branch of the Jews, and differing from the rest only in some few particulars not worth enquiring into? It was his business certainly

universally fallen. How ready soever he may be to omit or disguise some things which he imagin'd might unnecessarily give offence to his Gentile readers, or weaken his credit with them, he is by no means an humble advocate for his countrymen, imploring the compassion of their conquerors. He is more concern'd for their honour and dignity, and happily exerts his great abilities in placing them upon a level with the wisest and most considerable nations of antiquity. Would then such an historian be forward to cast a reflexion upon the sense and understanding of his countrymen? And must he not have been palpably guilty of so doing, had he wilfully neglected to inform his Heathen readers, that this Jesus, who was known to have made so much noise in Judæa, and who was at this very time ador'd by great multitudes of that people, did appear to have something peculiarly astonishing and perhaps more than human in him? For Josephus was not surely such a novice, as to be ignorant, that, when the world is prejudic'd against a nation or body of men, any gross imputation thrown upon a considerable part of them, is naturally and generally extended to the disadvantage of the whole. Those who seem to think that, if he spoke at all of Christ, he must have vented some stupid abusive Rabbinical story of him, would do well to attend to these particulars.

1 Thus Festus, Act. 25. 19. *Ζητήματα δὲ τὰ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ διαδιδάσκοντες ἔχοντες αὐτὸν &c.* And Celsus, Orig. L. 3. p. 112. with his usual sufficiency, represents the whole dispute as being only *αὐτὸν ἰσχυρίζεσθαι*.
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to give as candid a relation of the origin of a sect so circumstanc'd, as was consistent with his principles. This he prudently does, describing their leader in such a light, as might in some measure account for the number both of Jews and Gentiles that had embrac'd his doctrine.

Other reasons might easily be assign'd to evince the propriety of this short and obscure character here given of Jesus by Josephus. But, had not his meaning been strangely perverted by affixing Christian ideas to his expressions, the three things which he immediately subjoins to it, would have been sufficient. These are, the astonishing works which Jesus had perform'd, the surprizing regard that had been paid to his extraordinary doctrines, and the great multitude both of Jews and Heathen, who had been led away by him. Must Josephus have view'd him with Christian eyes in order to have observ'd any one of these things concerning him? Quite otherwise. They were incontestable and notorious. They were the great difficulties, which must have obtruded themselves on the mind of the most determin'd unbeliever of his age and country, supposing him a man of any sense or reflexion. Josephus is accordingly struck with them. But

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notwithstanding these amazing appearances in his favour, it was, he thought, demonstrable *a priori*, that Jesus could not be the Messiah nor even a true prophet. Another solution is therefore ready at hand. He anticipates the difficulty with it, and prepares his Heathen reader for his short and mysterious account of one of the most extraordinary affairs that had ever happen'd, by as short and mysterious a character of it's author. *Γίνεται δὲ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον Ἰησοῦς τις, σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, ἃς ἀνδρα αὐτὸν λέγουσιν Ἰσραήλ.* The full import of which dark but expressive sentence, if taken in every view which Josephus might possibly intend by it, seems to be this: "But about this time appear'd one Jesus, a man who was possess'd of all the natural and acquir'd abilities requisite to the head of a sect, if however he may properly be stil'd a mere man; one who must have been well vers'd in the secrets of art and nature, if indeed he had not something supernatural in him; a person whom, though justly rejected by the wisest of our nation, you Gentiles to whom I am writing, and who are apt to treat every thing relating to us with so much contempt, would have esteem'd equal to any of your ancient σοφοὶ or sages, if you had not perhaps consider'd him in a higher view."

ὁ δὲ μαγδάλου ἱεγὼν μωυσις¹. For he was a worker of wonders. And what Jew almost either ancient or modern that has written of Jesus, does not say the same? They differ indeed as widely as possible in their endeavours to account for them. What the Pharisees, who were eye-witnesses, had too much sense to dream of ascribing to any less cause than the superior agency of an Evil Spirit; what Josephus, living in the next generation, and consequently somewhat less affected by them, does, though more indirectly, and with some appearance of hesitation, attribute to the like principle, is at length, agreeably to the trifling genius of the later Rabbins, more philosophically solv'd by the stealing a sacred roll² out of the temple. But the notoriety of some of the great things which Jesus did, was in those earliest ages allow'd on all hands; and accordingly oblig'd the Heathen sophists to brighten up the traditionary wonders of their ancient sages, and to coin new ones, in order to have something of the like nature to oppose to them.

¹ This is not merely a periphrasis for *magician*, but somewhat more expressive and particular. "He was by *profession* and *character* μαγδάλου ἱεγὼν μωυσις. This was what he was chiefly remarkable for, the light in which, according to our author, he is principally to be consider'd."

² Containing the true pronunciation of the name מןן.

The fact then which Josephus mentions, could not be dissembled. But the conciseness and ambiguity with which it is express'd, are extremely proper. Silent entirely with regard to the great variety and singular nature of the miracles which Jesus had done, he is satisfied with simply representing him as a worker *ἐργων παραδοξων*, a word, which all who are acquainted with it's natural and original signification, and more particularly with the uses to which Josephus commonly applies it¹, will perceive to be one of the most equivocal, and consequently the best adapted to his dubious character of the person concern'd, that this extensive and copious language could have afforded him.

The next remarkable particular mention'd of Jesus is, that he was *διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἰδού τὰς ἀληθείας δεχομένων*, a teacher of people who embrac'd the truth with pleasure. This sentiment, it is said, is evidently Christian². But what if by the slightest and easiest emendation, which can well be conceiv'd, and this

¹ It is a word very familiar to him, and by which he denotes any thing *strange, extraordinary, or unaccountable*, of what kind or degree soever it may be.

² Thus Bæcler, *De Test. Flavian. Ep. 22.* — Tristis ac putida elegantia, *Faber.* See likewise Richardson. *Præl. Eccl. v. 1. p. 112.* and others.

not merely conjectural, but seemingly supported by good authority, it may be render'd as evidently Jewish? What if we read, instead of ΤΑΛΗΘΗ, ΤΑ ΑΛΘΗ¹, *new, strange, and unheard of doctrines*, contrary to those in which his hearers had been educated, and to which they had been hitherto accusom'd? This appears to me to be the true reading. It is significantly expressive of the most obvious and leading sentiments both of Jew and Gentile with regard to Christianity². It is moreover pecu-

¹ Josephus elsewhere frequently uses neutral adjectives in the like elliptical and emphatical manner. Thus, to instance in this very expression, he says, the Samaritans were so closely belieg'd by Hyrcanus, and reduc'd to such straits by him, ὡς ἀψάδῃ ΤΩΝ ΑΛΘΩΝ. v. 1. p. 661. Nor is this word, as may perhaps be imagin'd, a *weak* or *lifeless* expression. It denotes, not only any thing that is merely *unusual* or *uncommon*, but what is sufficiently so to be the object of *surprise* and *astonishment*. Thus *Ælian*, *Var. Hist.* L. 2. c. 14. though speaking of the stupendous passage which Xerxes cut for his fleet through mount Athos, as one of the most extraordinary actions of his life, simply styles it ὡς ΑΛΘΩ. But a *Jewish* historian, writing professedly in commendation of the ancient institutions and customs of his country, must, in an affair of a new religion that had sprung up in it, have annex'd the strongest ideas to an expression of this nature. And accordingly, speaking of the ill effect of the new doctrines of Judas of Galilee, he lays an emphasis upon a word, as nearly related to this in question as possible. He says that he and his followers laid the first foundation for the ruin of their country, ὡς ΑΞΥΝΘΕΙ ὡς ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐπιστάμεθα. v. 1. p. 870.

² The constant opposition of Christ to several of the doctrines and

liarly proper in the mouth of Josephus. He was particularly concern'd, as will more fully appear hereafter, to speak of Christianity to his Heathen readers, as something quite ἀγθς, perfectly foreign and unconnected with Judaism.

But Eusebius, the oldest and best evidence that can be produc'd, seems to declare likewise in favour of this emendation. For, though the copies both of his *Demonstratio Evangelica* and *Ecclesiastical History*, in which he has cited this passage, do at present, as well as those of Josephus, read τὰ ληθῆ, yet an observation, which that writer has subjoin'd in the former of those works, and in which he has interwoven the substance of this whole sentence, intimates that he himself read τὰ ἀγθῆ.

Πὼς γὰρ ἂν, says he, Ed. Paris. p. 124. ἄλλως ἐκινήσῃ τὴν Ἰουδαϊκὴν καὶ τὴν ἑλληνικὴν πόλιν, εἰ μὴ πρὸς ἰουμασις καὶ ὁρδαίοις ἔργοις, καὶ ΖΕΝΙΖΟΥΣΗ καὶ

and πικροδύτοις ἀντι-ἐκινήσῃ was notorious. Μὴ νομίσῃτε ὅτι ἔλθω κηρύττειν τὴν εἰρήνην ἢ τὸν φόβον, Matth. 5. 18. and the frequent accusations of this nature brought by the Jews against St. Paul, shew plainly in what light Christianity was principally consider'd by them. Thus also the Athenians, Act. 17. 19, 20. Hence Lucian *de morte Peregrini*, speaks of Christ as having been crucified, ἐν ΚΑΙΝΗΝ ταύτης τελευτῇ ἐκλήρωσεν εἰς τὸν βίον. But this particular is abundantly evident, both from the nature of the thing itself, and from the whole tenour of the New Testament.

ἔστιν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ; Does not the obvious and distinct reference of every part of this sentence to the corresponding expressions of Josephus, afford a fair presumption that, in his representation of the doctrine of Jesus, Eusebius alluded to the character here given of it by that author? And is not his ἐκζητῶσα διδασκαλία visibly a paraphrase upon τὴν αἰσθητήν? Nor will any one, I apprehend, prefer the authority of subsequent manuscripts or versions, who considers, how easily such a slight corruption might have been introduc'd, and how readily the far more agreeable expression τὰ ληθῆ must in a passage of this nature have been adopted by every Christian transcriber?.

1 Εἰς δὲ Ν. says Isidore, L. 4. Ep. 225. λίαν θαυμάζω τινος εἶναι τοιοῦτος ἢ τὸ φιλάληθες· μέγα δὲ ἐν αἷς ἀπὸ, διδασκαλίας ἀποδιδόναι τῷ ἰδιῷ ΤΑΛΗΘΗ διεξιόντων.

2 It may not perhaps be impertinent to observe, as a further support to the emendation here propos'd, that ἰδιῷ δὲ χροιά is often us'd by Josephus to denote, not so much a regard for truth and reason, as a remarkable fondness for particular things or persons, and frequently, a passion excited by something plausible, striking, or extraordinary in outward appearances. Thus (not to mention various other instances, in which it is us'd in some one of these senses) the cause, says he, v. 1. p. 864. that the impostor who pretended to be a son of Herod, had so many followers, was τῷ ἀποδιδόναι τὸ ἰδιῷ διεξιόντων τὰς λέξεις ἐν τῷ περιγυρῶν τῆς μαζῆς, viz. the turn which the generality of people have for believing an extraordinary story, when supported by a specious circumstance. How extremely like this expression

We may then fairly discard the Christian sentiment here complain'd of, and at the same time acquit the original author of this section of having had any concern with it. His account was simple and natural. *Ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής, διδασκαλὸς ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν δεχομένων, καὶ πολλὰ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῷ Ἑλληνικῷ ἐπηχρίσαν.* For he was a worker of wonders, a teacher of people who embrac'd his new and extraordinary doctrines with eagerness; and he led away many not only of the Jews, but likewise of the Gentiles after him. All the infinite and astonishing particulars of the life of Christ, his manifold and most extraordinary miracles, the authority with which he taught, the singular nature of his doctrine, the peculiar attention and regard paid to him by the bulk of the Jewish nation, (without the least notice taken of the remarkable holiness, purity, and goodness of his demeanour, or of the similar tendency of his system) all these wonderful particulars, and the no less amazing consequences of them in the conversion of a great number, not only of his own countrymen, but *pression* is to that here us'd with regard to Christ's disciples, has been remark'd by others. But with what infinitely greater beauty and propriety will this likeness appear, if it arose from a similarity of sentiment, which is evidently the case, if instead of *ἐπὶ αὐτῷ* we read *ἐν αὐτῷ*.
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even of the Heathen world, are slightly pass'd over in one short sentence; which plainly speaks the language of an inattentive and prejudic'd spectator, who is somewhat surpriz'd indeed at an extraordinary appearance that forces itself upon him, but beholds it in a wrong light, sees it imperfectly and indistinctly at a distance, and instead of approaching nearer to it, carelessly contents himself with a transient view of it. A Christian impostor would not probably have given so slight an account of these notorious and astonishing incidents in the history of Jesus, nor have cast in such a seemingly easy manner so great a degree of shade upon them.

But the last clause of this sentence is particularly worthy our notice. Josephus (considering the state of Christianity as it stood in his time, and, in this cursory view of it, naturally ascribing to the head of the sect, what had been begun by him, and afterwards compleated by his disciples in pursuance of his orders) observes with some degree of emphasis, that Jesus had led away not only several of the Jews, but, which he seems to be most surpriz'd at, many likewise of the Gentiles. *πολλὰς μὲν Ἰουδαίους, πολλὰς δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἑαῆνικοὺς ἀπαγαγόντα.* An observation this, peculiarly proper, if con-

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sider'd as proceeding from it's suppos'd author. Living in an age of wonders with regard to his own people, he had seen many pretended prophets arise, and draw aside great multitudes after them. But their influence had been always confin'd to those of their own nation. Christianity was the only instance to the contrary, and in this respect a very singular phenomenon. That a person who had appear'd as a Jewish teacher, and had assum'd the yet more confin'd and national character of their Messiah, should have engag'd the attention of the Gentile world, and have gain'd a great number of converts among persons utterly unacquainted with the very foundation of his pretensions, and naturally prejudic'd against them, must to a Jewish writer, convinc'd of the falsehood of them, have appear'd one of the strangest and most unaccountable circumstances in this whole affair. But Josephus, consider'd as the tacit apologist for his countrymen, had moreover an evident reason for insisting upon this remarkable particular. It was a proper hint to his Heathen readers, that they acted unfairly in laying the whole odium of Christianity to the account of the Jews, that they were mistaken in looking upon it merely as a sect among them, and in adding this to their other pre-

prejudices against them'. In order to which he has within the compass of this short paragraph acquainted them, that the followers of this Jesus (who is here represented, not as a pretended prophet of the *Jewish* religion, but as a detach'd person, standing entirely upon his own bottom, and as a teacher of new and strange doctrines) were indiscriminately com-

1 And yet even this clause cannot escape without censure. Quos enim Gentiles, says Blondel, *Dē Test. Flav. Ep. 17.* (si unam Syrophœnissam cujus filiam sanavit, excipias) convertisse legitur? Ad eos se missum negat, Chananæam canem vocat, & pane filiorum indignam pronuntiat. Discipulos evangelii prima semina jacturos in viam gentium abire, & in urbem Samaritanorum ingredi vetuit; nec ante demissum cœlo linteum gentes ad participationem gratiæ suæ vocandi potestatem fecit. Quæ ergo *ἐκκλησία* induxerit? — Because, by the word *ἐκκλησία*, the author does not mean, that Jesus formally enlisted them himself in the number of his disciples, or render'd them immediately perfect or profess'd converts to his system, (which was not the case with regard to any number even of the Jews themselves during his life time) but only, that he engag'd their attention by his miracles, dispos'd them to listen to his public instructions, and to follow him as a very extraordinary teacher or leader; which, it is evident from the Gospel history, happen'd indiscriminately to the bulk of those who at that time resided in Jerusalem and other parts of Judæa. — Because, after mentioning his miracles and teaching, it was in this case perfectly natural to subjoin one of the most remarkable consequences of them. — And lastly, because it was evidently the business of Josephus to draw off, as soon as possible, the attention of the reader from his own countrymen, by immediately connecting the Gentiles as equally *principals* in the affair with them.

pos'd of people of all nations; that the principal men of Judæa instead of having given any encouragement to this affair, had endeavour'd to stifle it in it's infancy by procuring the crucifixion of it's author; and that the Christians were to be consider'd, not as a branch of the Jews, but as a distinct *φύλη*, or body of men by themselves, denominated from their particular leader.

But to proceed, Josephus after this affectedly concise account of the character, actions, and disciples of one Jesus, who had appear'd in those times, the history of which he was then writing, informs his Heathen readers in a short and easy parenthetical sentence¹, that this was the person so well known to them by another name, viz. that of CHRIST. *ο Χριστος ὅτις ἦν*. Not, as the adversaries of this passage on the one hand, or it's advocates on the other, equally misled by Christian notions, have generally

¹ At ex abrupto dicit Vossius hæc inferi verba. De Test. Flav. Ep. 15. The objector must in this particular have been a great stranger to the stile of Josephus. It is his usual way to interrupt the course of his relation by such parenthetical sentences, with regard both to men and things. Thus *φασὶν παῖς ὅτις ἦν*. v. 1. p. 973. *Πάλιν δ' ἔστιν αὐτῇ*. ibid. p. 384. *Πάλιν δὲ ἦν αὐτῇ*. ib. p. 619. *Μιμνήσκω δ' ὅτι ὅτις ἦν*. v. 2. p. 2. The shortness and abruptness of this clause, instead of being objections to it, are, in the view in which I here understand it, presumptions in it's favour.

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interpreted it, *This was the Christ, or the person said to be the Christ*, viz. as a Jewish appellation, or title of office and dignity, concerning which he has carefully avoided dropping the least hint throughout his whole history; but CHRIST, consider'd as a mere unmeaning *proper* name, a name, which Josephus, who had convers'd so many years with the Heathen world, and to whom alone he was professedly writing, knew very well would convey no other idea to them, than that of a particular person whom they had often heard so call'd, and famous for having been the head of a certain sect, who were universally stil'd Christians from this suppos'd name of their founder. This is so evidently an easy and just interpretation of the sentence, that had not several great critics thought otherwise of it, a common reader,

1. See the Note at the end of this paragraph.

2 This clause, which appears to me to be the most innocent and unexceptionable of any thro'out the whole section, has yet been principally objected to. They who look upon this account as entirely spurious, seem to triumph in it, as amounting to a demonstration in their favour. And some on the other side are for compounding the matter, and would willingly give it up in order to preserve the remainder. Bishop Mountague, Ittigius, and Reland imagine it to be a Christian interpolation, not considering that it is particularly refer'd to in the last sentence of this section. Usher and Isaac Vossius (supported as they conceive by Jerom's version, *Et credebatur esse Christus*) read, *Enigmata*

who had seen how constantly the word is us'd merely as a proper name by the Heathen, and who consider'd to whom the author was speaking, might perhaps have deem'd it trifling to offer any thing in support of it. Nor is either the clause itself, when taken in this view, or the manner in which it is introduc'd, less obviously natural and pertinent. This will appear by comparing the account we are examining with that of a cotemporary Heathen author. Tacitus¹, having had occasion to mention the Christians, proceeds briefly to give us the notion which he himself and the generality of the Gentile world entertain'd concerning their original. "Auctor nominis ejus CHRISTUS², qui Tiberio imperitante &c." But our historian, who knew more of

ὁ αὐτὸς Χριστός. Steph. le Moynes fancies it was originally ὁ Χριστός λεγόμενος. Valefius, Huetius, and others think λεγόμενος may fairly be understood. But, if I may venture to dissent from all these learned critics, there is nothing in my opinion wanting or to be understood, but what is naturally imply'd in the article ὁ and the very turn of the sentence, viz. ὁ φασίστης, or ὁ πολυφώνος, the person, who has made so much noise in the world. In this view, it is with the utmost propriety oppos'd to the manner in which his less known Jewish name had been at first mention'd, Γίνεται δὲ --- Ἰησοῦς ΤΙΣ.

¹ Annal. L. 15.

² Viz. the mere proper name of their leader in the opinion of this author, and no more conveying any other idea with it than that of Pythagoras or Socrates.

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the matter, begins his relation with the original Jewish name of the person of whom he is writing: *Ἰησοῦς δὲ—Ἰησοῦς τὸς* &c. Conscious however to whom he is addressing himself, and how universally the name of Jesus, which was common to him and several other persons, had among the Heathen been absorb'd by that of CHRIST, he presently subjoins for their information, *ὁ Χριστὸς ὅτι ἦν* ' little dreaming that any such readers would mistake his meaning, or foreseeing, (as much a prophet as he fancied himself upon some occasions) how soon his works were to be engross'd by a different set of men, who might be likely to do so.

1 Though I have the misfortune to be almost singular in my notion of this sentence, yet I must beg leave to observe, that it appears to me to be not only free from any reasonable objection, but in some measure necessarily connected with what goes before. Josephus introduces a seemingly unknown and extraordinary person, whom he represents as having been the head of a very numerous sect; and yet contents himself with giving as short and superficial an account of him as possible. *Tantum rem tam negligenter?* That a Jewish historian should be inclin'd to handle it in this manner, is no wonder: But what pretence has he for so doing? ---- Because, as he here seems to intimate, the notoriety of the subject excus'd him from entering into particulars. It was sufficient to inform his Heathen readers that this Jesus was the same extraordinary person whom they had often heard of under another name. *Ὁ [παρανόματος] Χριστὸς ὅτι ἦν*.

2 What has been observ'd from Tacitus might easily be supported by similar well known passages from Suetonius and the younger Pliny, Ep. ad Trajan. Imp. 97. who liv'd about
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The next sentence certainly asserts nothing that the severest critic can except against. καὶ

αὐτὸν ἐνδείξει τῶν πρώτων ἀνδρῶν παρ' ἡμῶν συνῶν ἐν-

the same time with Josephus. Nay Tertullian long after, addressing himself to the Heathen, observes that the word Christianus perperam Christianus pronunciatur a vobis. Nam nec nominis est notitia penes vos. Apol. c. 3. But I chuse rather to appeal to a learned modern critic, whose testimony must in this case be deem'd perfectly unexceptionable. Tan. Faber, writing with great smartness and vehemence against this passage, says, "Satin' Josepho fuisset, ut Judæorum populorumque ἀναστροφῆς liberatio orbi innotesceret; satin', inquam, ei fuisset dicere, ὅτις ὁ Ἰησοῦς, hic erat Christus? Græci, propter quos maxime libros Ἀρχαιολογίας scripsit, (ait enim in præfatione, Ταῦτα δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἐνταχθεῖσιν παραμυθίας, καὶ ἔτι ἄλλα φανερὰ τοῖς Ἑλλήσι ἀξίως συνδίδε) Græci, inquam, satis cum venia poterant ignorare quidnam omnino esset Christus; quippe qui nec vocem illam quidem intelligerent, ut ex nonnullis veterum observare est, qui Christum malebant quam Christum vocare, &c." Could Josephus then possibly apprehend that any such readers, to whom alone he was professedly writing, would affix a different meaning to this short explanatory clause from that which I suppose him to have intended by it?--But it has oddly happen'd, that an affair of much the same nature with this in question, has in like manner exercis'd the critics of the eastern world. Mohammed has in more places than one of his Koran stil'd Jesus المسيح ὁ Χριστός, meaning, like Josephus, merely the name by which he was most generally known. But his followers; determin'd that the word should not be quite so insignificant, and yet either designedly or unwittingly excluding the true import of it, have contriv'd to deduce it, some from it's true root, but with a very different meaning, and others from حَجَّ so be a religious traveller or pilgrim.

παραμυθίας

παραστήσας Πιλάτου, ἐκ ἰπαύσεως οὔτε πρῶτον¹ ἀγαπήσεως². *And though Pilate, upon an impeachment brought by the principal persons³ of our nation against him, caus'd him to be crucified, they who had before entertain'd an affection for him, did not desist.* The whole air of this relation is perfectly Jewish, without the least affectation of appearing so. Whilst it carries the face of a simple and seemingly candid narrative, the author has sufficiently intimated his opinion of what was done. The crucifixion of Jesus is represented, not as being what it really was, the work of

¹ Some ancient authors and MSS of Josephus read οὐ τὸ πρῶτον, which Daubuz prefers. Others add αὐτῶν.

² Estne, says Boecler, De Test. Flav. Ep. 22. illa periphrasis fecit, οὔτε πρῶτον ἀγαπήσεως, aliunde quam è scholis Christianorum, in quibus nata est, arcessenda? Yes; from Josephus, who (as was before observ'd with regard to the word ἰδιότης) commonly uses this verb to signify a particular attachment to any person or thing, a peculiar fondness or fancy for them. Thus, speaking of the town given by Achish to David, he says, ἡ βασιλεύσεως τοῦ Δαυὶδ ἀγαπήσας, ἰδίῳ κτήματι ἱπποσύνην ἔσχευε, which David even after he was king, taking a particular fancy to it &c. v.1. p. 353. But Daubuz has sufficiently answer'd this objection.

³ Jesus, who (if the slight alteration I have propos'd, may be admitted) had been represented as a leader ἀνερωπῶν τῶν ἰδίων καὶ αὐτῶν διχημάτων, viz. (to use the language of the Pharisees) ὄχλου τοῦ μὴ συνίστασθαι τὸν νόμον, and who were easily carried away by any striking novelty; is formally condemn'd ἰδιότητι τῶν πρῶτων ἀνδρῶν παρ' ἡμῖν. The contrast between these eminent persons and the ἡθροῦς, the lower sort of people above-mention'd, needs no illustration.

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faction, tumult, and confusion, but as the result of a calm determination of the principal persons among the Jews, confirm'd by Pilate's approbation of their proceedings. And the inveterate prejudices of his followers are consider'd as exerting themselves in favour of a crucified leader and in opposition to the formal decision of these great judges.

But if this sentence is not quite so favourable to the Christian cause, as might even with justice have been expected, we have ample amends made us for it in the next. Εφάν γάρ αὐτοῖς τέλει ἔχων ἡμέραν πάλιν ζῶν, τῶν θείων ποσφητῶν ταῦτά τε καὶ ἄλλα μυρία θαυμαστά περὶ αὐτοῦ ἐσηκόντων. What? Could the impostor hold out no better for one short paragraph? Could he not be contented to let his mask slip off gently, without throwing it aside all at once with so much eagerness? Could not the author of this short relation, who had been sufficiently sparing in his account of the life of Christ, have been satisfied with giving us mere matter of fact, without illustrating and confirming it by this extraordinary reflexion? Could a person, who must have read Josephus with some attention, in order to have adopted so many of his expressions, so very soon forget one of the most striking things (especially to

a Christian) in his works, viz. his having resolv'd all the *μυρία θωμάσια* of the prophets concerning the Messiah into one poor *ἀμφίβολος ἄριστος*, and (what was still more extraordinary in a Jew) his having pre-engag'd this to his Heathen patron Vespasian¹ ? This is certainly, to use Faber's expression upon the occasion, *eis ἄκρον μωρίας ἰλάσται*. And so far am I from imagining such a sentence to have dropt from the pen of Josephus, that I cannot conceive it probable, that it should have slipt from any one who was seriously personating him². It seems rather to be the work of some Christian transcriber, who, either not understanding the subtle meaning originally couch'd in a more artful sentence, or offended at it, has by a very slight alteration given a perfectly different turn to the whole. For, if instead of *ΤΩΝ ΘΕΙΩΝ* we read *ΤΩΝ ΓΕ ΙΔΙΩΝ*, an adjective that occurs almost in every page of Josephus, it will speak the sentiments, which this author probably had of the affair, in the most

¹ See v. 2. p. 390.

² It must not however be dissembled that the learned Dr Chapman, *Euseb.* v. 1. p. 387. has endeavour'd to remove this absurdity by proposing a new interpretation of *ἐπὶ αὐτῷ*, viz. referring it to the *real* Christ, which this Jesus was *falsely*, in the opinion of Josephus, suppos'd to be by his followers. But this construction appears to me extremely unnatural.

easy and natural manner. Having observ'd that the followers of Jesus still adher'd to him even after his crucifixion, he subjoins, Εφάνη γὰρ αὐτοῖς τρίτην ἔχον ἡμέραν πάλιν ζῶν, τῶν γε ἰδίων¹ ὡσφιστῶν² πᾶσι τε καὶ ἄλλοις μυρία θυνμάσια πρὸς αὐτῷ

1 This word occurs so very frequently in Josephus, both for the pronoun αὐτός, and more particularly as a mark of *distinction* and *peculiarity*, that it would be quite trifling to trouble the reader with instances of either kind. As the pronoun αὐτός is twice repeated in this sentence, the historian, if he intended to express what I here suppose, could not easily have avoided using the word ἰδίων, which has likewise, in the *precise* signification of it abovemention'd, a visible propriety upon this occasion.

2 Josephus having in no other part of his works taken the least notice of the preachers of Christianity, (except in the incidental mention of James, whom he more properly distinguishes by the peculiar title of ἀδελφὸν τοῦ τοῦ λαοῦ Χριστοῦ, v. i. p. 976.) it must of course be impossible to produce any parallel instance, in which he has given them this appellation. But that, in case he did speak of them, he would stile them by this name, is upon all accounts highly probable. For first, it appears both from Scripture and ecclesiastical history, that the word ὡσφιστῶν, not in its confin'd and vulgar meaning, but in its general notion of *divinorum interpretes*, was one of the most ordinary, and (if we except only the apostles, most of whom were now dead, and whose particular distinctive title he was not likely to have us'd upon this occasion) the principal denomination of the inspir'd preachers of Christianity at this time. What expression then could Josephus more naturally use in speaking of them, than their proper appellation, limited by a word denoting that they were so stil'd by their particular sect, with which he had no concern? Thus, speaking of Ahab's prophets, he calls them τὰς ὡσφιστάς αὐτῷ, v. i. p. 459. And in like manner, v. i. p. 460, 507, 445, and elsewhere, the gods and priests of particular persons and nations

αἰρητόων¹. For he appear'd to them to be alive²

nations are term'd by him ἴδιος θεοῦ and ἴδιος ἱερέως. Secondly, the title of *ωφείτης*, in the most general notion of it, viz. as *divinorum interpres*, or *sacrorum antistes*, was no less familiar to his Heathen readers. This, were it necessary, might easily be prov'd at large from Plato, Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Lucian, Porphyry, Eusebius, (see the note of Valefius upon his Eccl. Hist. L. 4. c. 8.) and other ancient authors. Hence St Paul calls Epimenides the Cretan, ἴδιος αὐτῶν ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ. And, in allusion to this use of the word, Plutarch, Ed. Franc. v. 2. p. 397. says, ὁμοῦς τὸς τῷ *Επιμῆνιδι* ΠΡΟΦΗΤΑΣ. And Lucian in Vit. Auf. introduces Diogenes styling himself *ΑΛΛΟΘΕΟῦς καὶ ΠΑΙΡΗΣΙΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ*. But, which is most to our present purpose, the same author in his treatise De morte Peregrini, observing that upon that person's being converted to Christianity, he soon became one of it's leaders, says, *ἰσχυρῶς παῖδας αὐτὸς ἀπέφηκε, ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ καὶ διακόνος* ---- αὐτὸς ὦν. Thirdly, Josephus himself, speaking of the Egyptian v. 1. p. 972. and v. 2. p. 177. who led away much people after him, and of those who encourag'd the Zealots to hold out against the Romans, v. 1. p. 388. uses this word with regard to them. Lastly, the term *ωφείτης*, even in the most limited and vulgar notion of it, is peculiarly proper here. For the *μεγὰρ ἡννομήσα*, according to my notion of this passage, relate chiefly to the *future* coming and kingdom of Christ, and the expectations of his disciples in consequence of what their *ωφείτης* had foretold concerning him. The *ωφείτης λόγος*, to which St Peter, Ep. 2. c. 1. 19. appeals for these things, does in like manner, as a great Prelate has observ'd in his discourses upon Prophecy, refer to what these persons had predicted concerning them.

1 In the same manner Celsus (see Orig. p. 123.) says, Τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀνέστηναι ὑπὸ τῶν ἹΔΙΩΝ ΘΙΑΣΩΤΩΝ ὡφθαλμοῦ ΦΑΣΙΝ.

2 The ordinary method among the Greeks of substituting the *participle* for the *infinitive mood*, especially after the verb *φαίνομαι*, and others expressive of any *sentiment* or *opinion*, seems sufficiently to justify this interpretation.

again

again on the third day, their own preachers¹ at least having reported both these and numberless other wonderful things concerning him. Allow- ing then only this slight alteration², every

¹ Some persons however may perhaps chuse to alter the pun- ctuation, and join this clause with the next sentence thus, Τῶν ΔΕ ἰδόντων ἀποφθιῶν--ὅς τε αὖν [or as other MSS read, ὅς ἐν αὖν]--φύλοι.

² Though Eusebius cannot here, as in the former case, p. 28. be directly appeal'd to in favour of this particular conjecture, he has however afforded us some reason for imagining, that Jose- phus did not originally bear so *positive* and *formal* a testimony, as we meet with at present, to the resurrection of Jesus, (much less introduc'd the numberless miracles foretold of him by the pro- phets in confirmation of it) but had rather given a more *sceptical* turn to his account of this and the *μυστα σωμάτων* join'd with it; and had represented them as resting chiefly upon the authority of the preachers of Christianity. Otherwise, how happens it that this writer, who is forward enough in enlarging upon what is most to the advantage of Christianity, confines his observation, *Dem. Evang.* p. 124. entirely to the former part of this account, when the latter, as it now stands, evidently speaks much more strongly in it's favour? How happens it, except upon the sup- position above-mention'd, that in this observation, he considers the whole account chiefly as bearing testimony to the *number* of Christ's disciples, and as affording only an *argument* of something extraordinary in the person who converted them, and not rather as *directly* and *formally* asserting (which it certainly does at pre- sent) what he thus *obliquely* deduces from it concerning him? In short, whoever compares the above-mention'd calm remarks of Eusebius with the admiration which Isidore, Sozomen, and others (who read the passage as it now stands) have express'd with regard to it, will perhaps be inclin'd to suspect that it did soon after his time undergo some such slight and easy corruptions as I conceive to have happen'd to it.

difficulty

difficulty before complain'd of vanishes at once, a circumstance which is certainly no inconsiderable presumption in it's favour. The former part of the sentence, which, as it stood before, seem'd to assert the reality of Chriff's resurrection in too positive a manner, is properly corrected and qualified by the latter; which, instead of containing an impertinent and Christian reflexion, is the genuine language both of a seemingly candid historian and of a careless and determin'd unbeliever. The account in this view is precisely what might have been expected from Josephus. He simply mentions the notoriously well attested fact of the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after his crucifixion, as the reason of their adhering to him. But chusing to look upon it as an affair which it little concern'd either him or those to whom he was writing, whether it was true or false, and avoiding, as he had hitherto done, to enter at all into the merits of the question, he gives them, with his usual air of indifference, his authority

1 The exact conformity which the sentence above-mention'd, if taken in this view, bears to the sceptical manner in which Josephus frequently closes his accounts of the greatest miracles wrought even by Moses and the prophets, seems to be a presumption in its behalf.

for

for what he had said; artfully perhaps subjoining the ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν, (viz. the ascension, second coming, and future kingdom of Christ) publish'd and foretold by these περὶ ἧται, in this affectedly careless manner in order to invalidate their testimony. After which he concludes the account of this extraordinary sect with observing, what to him (convinc'd that Jesus could not be the Messiah) must have appear'd one of the most remarkable circumstances in it, that this body of Christians so denominated from their leader, (notwithstanding the attempts both of Jews and Heathen to extirpate them) still subsisted to that day.

Εἰς ² τὴν νῦν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομασίου ἐκ

1 This, otherwise extravagant and hyperbolical, expression, if join'd with τῶν καὶ ἰδίων &c. and understood in the sense in which I suppose it to have been intended, becomes at once perfectly easy and natural. It detracts from the certainty of the fact with which it is connected, exaggerates the accounts given by the preachers of Christianity to render them incredible, and affords our author a plausible pretence for passing them over in silence as being in his opinion unworthy a particular relation.

2 If we take this paragraph as it is commonly read and understood, and look upon it as entirely the work of a Christian impostor, there is something very unaccountable in it. For is it probable, that a person who had just before made so free with the Jewish author whom he is personating, and whose warm imagination had entirely gotten the better of his judgment in the last sentence, should have cool'd again so very suddenly, and have

ἐπέλπιε τὸ φύλον'.

have sunk at once into the opposite extreme? He had just before rambled strangely out of the course of this short narration to introduce the *μυρία θauμασια* of the prophets, and yet entirely passes over in silence the far more pertinent and notorious *θauμασια* of the Apostles, and the many *μυριαδες*, Act. 21. 20. known to have been converted to Christianity in consequence of them. Instead of touching upon either of these obvious particulars, which must have struck the fancy of any one who was endeavouring to make an *historian* speak in favour of Christianity, he breaks off abruptly, throws a sudden damp upon what he said before, and finishes with this cold and lifeless observation, That this sect (which he had represented as founded on truth, whose author had not only been a worker of miracles in his life time, but had afterwards risen from the dead, and who was so much the concern of providence, that some hundred years before his birth *μυρία θauμασια* had been foretold of him) *ἐκ ἐπίλπιε* was not extinct in little more than half a century after it's first appearance in the world. A Christian impostor, who had brought his Jewish historian so fairly within the pale of the Church, would not have let him off so easily, when he might, without the least danger or trouble, have afforded him a much more noble and no less notorious fact to finish his surprize with, viz. not the mere *continuance* but the extraordinary *increase* and *propagation* of the sect which he intended to honour. And accordingly the old author of the book *De Excid. Hierosol.* has taken the liberty to make Josephus conclude his account in this manner, "Ex quo cœpit congregatio Christianorum, & in omne hominum penetravit genus; nec ulla natio Romani orbis remansit, quæ cultus ejus expers relinqueretur."

On the contrary, view this sentence as really proceeding from Josephus, and as closing the account, when consider'd in the light in which I have endeavour'd to place it. Jesus, says our historian no way prejudic'd in his favour, was a person of surprizing abilities. He was a worker of wonders, a teacher of new

and singular doctrines, and founded a numerous sect, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles. Pilate, upon an impeachment of the principal men of our nation, crucified him for so doing. But his disciples still adher'd to him. For he appear'd to them to have been alive again after his crucifixion. The leaders at least of this sect have reported these and numberless other wonders concerning him. In consequence of which it has subsisted even to this day: or in other words, Such in short was the origin of Christianity, which (though founded upon the notion of a crucified Messiah, who, whatever his followers may have said about his resurrection and future coming, has not appear'd in the world for above half a century) still, to my no small surprize, subsists even to this day. Nothing can more naturally express what may be suppos'd to have been the sentiments of Josephus upon this occasion, or be better connected with what goes before, than this conclusion. The thing indeed which he chiefly intended by it after his short account of Jesus Christ, was simply to tell his Heathen readers, *Αὐτὸς τῶν ἐκ τῶν ἑθνῶν*, who still continue among you, *ἀναμνησθῆναι*. But his surprize at the very notion of the *continuance* of this sect gives a different turn to the sentence. Convinced, like his brother Pharisee Gamaliel, that what, he thought, was not of God, ought to have come to nothing by this time, he insensibly expresses some degree of astonishment at his disappointment with regard to this particular. — But after all, if any one should differ from me in my notion of this sentence, and should be inclin'd to look upon it as having far less meaning in it, and only informing the reader of what he must have known before; Josephus will not however upon this account be in any respect the less concern'd with it. He frequently concludes his stories with such seemingly insignificant observations.

Christiani ex Gentibus & Judæis, quo Josephus tempore scripsit, promiscue collecti, *ὅλων* dici nequaquam potuerunt. *Blondel*. Trifling and groundless! Had not Daubuz already said enough in answer to this objection, it would be easy to shew, that Josephus, whose business it was to represent the Christians as a peculiar set of people, perfectly different both from the
Jews

But a short view of the whole paragraph will best illustrate and confirm what has been observ'd. It may, I think, fairly be render'd in the following manner.

But about this time appears one Jesus, a man of great abilities, if indeed he may properly be stil'd a mere man. For he was a worker of wonders, a teacher of people who embrac'd his new and extraordinary doctrines with eagerness; and he led away many, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles after him. This was the person so well known by the name of Christ. And though Pilate, upon an impeachment brought by the principal persons of our nation against him, caus'd him to be crucified, they who had before entertain'd an affection for him, did not desist. For he appear'd to them to be alive again on the third

Jews and Gentiles, incorporated into a distinct society, and denominated from their particular leader, could not have us'd a more pertinent or significant expression.

1 It should, I apprehend, be read thus, Γίνεται δὲ καὶ τότε τὸν χρόνον Ἰησοῦς τις, σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, οἷον ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ λίγων χρόν. ἢ γὰρ παραδίδου ἔχων πικρὰς, διδασκαλῶ ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἰδιῶν τὰ ἄλλα διχηρῶν, οἷον πολλὰς μὲν Ἰουδαίους, πολλὰς δὲ οἷον τῷ ἔθνει Ἑβραίων ἐπαγαγοῦν. ὁ Χρὶς οὖν ἦν. καὶ αὐτὸν ἐπέδιδου τῶν σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἡμῶν πορῶν ἐπιστημονικῶν Παλάτων, ἐκ ἐπαύσεως οἱ τὸ σοφὸν ἀγαπήσαντες. ἐφάνη γὰρ αὐτοῖς τρεῖς ἔχων ἡμίσην πάλιν ζῶν, τῶν γὰρ ἰδιῶν σοφῶν ταῦτά τε [οἱ τῶν ἰδιῶν σοφῶν ταῦτά τε] καὶ ἄλλα μυρία θαυμάσια ἐπὶ αὐτῷ ἐργάζονται. οἷον τι τῶν τῶν Χριστιανῶν γὰρ τῶν ἐν οὐρανῶν ἐκ ἐπίστασι τὸ φύλον.

day, their own preachers at least having reported both these and numberless other wonderful things concerning him. And the sect of Christians, who receiv'd their denomination from this person, are not extinct even to this day.

Thus will this account stand, when freed from the two slight corruptions, which seem to have hitherto obscur'd it. And in this view, instead of containing any thing justly exceptionable, there is something in the face of the relation, the sentiments imply'd in it, and the language in which they are cloth'd, which may fairly be deem'd a presumption in it's favour. Nor can it, I think, be doubted which is the most rational way of proceeding, viz. whether to account for the few appearances to the contrary by some such seemingly obvious and natural method as that above-mention'd; or whether an objection or two of this kind which may so easily be remov'd, should, in direct opposition to the strongest external evidence, be esteem'd sufficient to condemn the whole section as a senseless and impertinent forgery.

But there are, it will be said, other objections to it. Let us therefore consider them in their order.

And

And first a very learned and ingenious author¹ having observ'd that the great point which Josephus had in view thro'out his whole history was to reconcile the Gentiles to his countrymen, and having remark'd the liberty which he has taken, when it serv'd his ends, of omitting whole histories, concludes that he would carefully avoid the mention of Jesus in his work. Because "the Pagan aversion was greatly increas'd by the new sect of Christians, sprung, as was well known, from the country of Judæa. It was therefore utterly destructive of his purpose to shew (as he must have done in giving them an account of Christ) the close connexion between the two religions. Of all dangerous subjects therefore Josephus would be careful to avoid this."

Now though I entirely agree with this great writer, that "preaching up Christ was an affair which Josephus would studiously decline;" and have always deem'd the appearances of this kind considerable objections to the passage in question as it is usually read and understood; yet I cannot but think (as many persons have already observ'd) that it is very improbable that he should omit all account of Jesus, a person so remarkable in Judæa, who so lately had been

¹ See the Divine Legation of Moses, v. 2. p. 432.

the

the cause of such great commotions among his countrymen, and whose fame was at this very time spread by his followers thro'out the world. Our artful historian might indeed (if he could answer it to himself) prudently avoid exposing to the view of his Gentile readers any disagreeable or dishonourable incident that lay buried in the ancient records of his nation, or even slip over some of later date, which had left no considerable traces behind them. But Christianity was an affair which made some noise at this very time. How little soever it's real nature and particular doctrines were consider'd or understood, both the author and professors of this new system had in some measure engag'd the attention of the Heathen. It was moreover universally known to have made it's first appearance in Judæa under Pilate's administration. Some account of it therefore seems to have been unavoidable in a person professedly treating of the extraordinary incidents of that period. And silence with regard to so remarkable and conspicuous an object would have been only shutting his own eyes, that others might not see it.

But Josephus has however an after-game to play. What was too notorious to be totally suppress'd, might yet be properly represented,
an

an art, of which, delicate as it is, he was no less master than of the former. Instead of splitting upon the rock, which the writer from whom I am here oblig'd to differ, has with great judgment observ'd, that he would be careful to avoid, he has, according to my notion of this account, kept as clear of it as possible, how wisely soever some less cautious Christian pilot may have thrown him upon it. So far is he from shewing his Heathen readers the close connexion between Judaism and Christianity, that he seems as it were to have laid aside in some measure his own Jewish character in order the more effectually to conceal it. We have not a Pharisee's relation of the scheme and doctrines of a suppos'd Jewish Messiah, which must have laid open what is here so industriously pass'd over in silence, but a short and obscure account given by an affectedly unconcern'd historian of the wonderful incidents in the life of one Jesus, better known to his Heathen readers by the name of Christ, the meaning however of which name (any farther than as it stood for the head of a famous sect who were from him denominated Christians) he knew they were generally ignorant of, without looking upon it as his business to acquaint them with it. And accordingly Jesus
here

here appears in a light perfectly unconnected with every Jewish consideration. He stands, like the founder of an Heathen sect, entirely upon his own bottom, is the teacher of a new and singular doctrine, supports it by his own astonishing works, and is indiscriminately follow'd by people of all religions, whilst he is formally condemn'd by the principal persons of the Jewish nation. He is in short plac'd by Josephus in much the same detach'd point of view, in which this author elsewhere for the like reason sets Judas¹ of Galilee, viz. as the leader *ἰδὼς αἰρέσεως*, with however this remarkable and unavoidable difference in his account of them, that whereas the latter was at most a *σεφίης δεινότητος*, there was, he could not but acknowledge, the appearance of something more than human in the actions of the former.

The next objection, which has been urg'd by many critics against this passage, is taken from the place in which it stands. It has been represented as perfectly impertinent, void of all connexion with what immediately precedes and follows it, and visibly interrupting the course of the history. But how formidable soever this objection may have been thought by some of those who have accustom'd them-

¹ See Joseph. v. 2. p. 160, 194.

selves to look upon this section, as an episodic panegyric upon Christ, it appears to me entirely groundless. Nor is there even any occasion to have recourse to what has been very justly remark'd in answer to it, the little order and connexion which Josephus and other historians frequently observe in relating such a collection of detach'd stories as are here thrown together. Our author had just before given a short account of two disturbances at Jerusalem, that had been occasion'd by the behaviour of Pilate the Roman governor, both which were, like this in question, of a religious nature. The first of these commotions plainly appears to have happen'd at his entrance upon his administration; and the second (though chronologers differ about the precise time of it) is, as having arisen from the same quarter, properly subjoin'd to it both here and in the second book of the Jewish Wars'. After which naturally follows the passage we are concern'd with, being a brief account of the rise, progress, and consequences of another religious disturbance, that deriv'd it's original indeed from a very different hand, but broke out about this time, and the author of which had been formally condemn'd by the Roman gover-

1 See v. 2. p. 167.

nour of whom he was speaking. And from this last affair, as if the noise it had since made at Rome, had suggested to him an incident suppos'd to be prior to all these, which he had forgot to mention, he goes off to relate a thing that had happen'd there, and which had occasion'd the banishment of the Jews from that city.

Nor is the manner in which the passage concerning Jesus is connected with the preceding one, less obviously easy and natural. Josephus concludes the former with this short remark, *Καὶ ἔτι τῶν αὐτῶν ἡ σὺνελξις*, and immediately subjoins, *Γίνουσι δὲ καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον* &c. which is the same as if he had said, *And thus ended this affair. But another arose about this time of a more astonishing nature; or, Thus was the disturbance which Pilate's proceedings had occasion'd, appear'd. But about this time appear'd a very extraordinary person, who was the author of another, much more remarkable in itself, and more lasting in it's consequences.* On the other hand, strike out the paragraph in dispute, and you will have two sentences between which there is a tacit opposition imply'd, thus immediately connected with each other. *Καὶ ἔτι τῶν αὐτῶν ἡ σὺνελξις. Καὶ ὑπὸ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους ἵκνησεν ὁ*

δαυὶδ ἰδοῦντες &c. a transition ¹, which, how willing soever Faber and others may be to adopt it, can in no respect, if either sound or sense is to be regarded, admit of a competition with the former.

But how, it will be ask'd, is the account of Jesus connected with the following passage, which is thus introduc'd, *καὶ—ἐμπρὶς τῷ δαυὶδ ἰδοῦντες ἰουδαῖος*, and which therefore plainly supposes *τῷ δαυὶδ*, that had been the occasion of a *ἰδοῦν*, to have immediately preceded? Now it is no wonder that they whose minds seem to have been wholly taken up with the extraordinary commendations which Josephus is here suppos'd to have bestow'd on Christ, should be at a loss how to solve this difficulty. For whence this sudden turn ²? How comes he to start back as it were in a fright, and with a kind of religious horror, at a character which he had just before beheld with some degree of pleasure? But view the account in the light in which I

¹ Had this passage immediately follow'd the other, it is highly probable that Josephus, who, whenever he has an opportunity, generally begins a new story with a particle referring to what he had observ'd at the *conclusion* of the last, would have said, *Υπὸ ΔΕ τῶν αὐτῶν* &c. L. Cappellus, as if he had been partly sensible of some impropriety, drops the conjunction *καὶ* before *ὁμοῖ*.

² An dixisset de Christo quem ita laudat, *ἰδοῦντες*? *Reland.*

have endeavour'd to represent it, and the objection will scarce seem to require an answer. Josephus, consider'd as a person convinc'd *a priori* that Christianity could not be true, and yet astonish'd at the amazing appearances in it's favour, and shock'd at the thought that so many Jews should have been drawn aside by it, must have had *τι δεινὸν* strongly impress'd upon his imagination. It haunts him indeed thro'out the whole affair, and struggling as it were with his artful endeavours to lessen and conceal it, has naturally produc'd this short, obscure, and ambiguous description, which, though the critics examining it in cold blood, and misled perhaps by two slight corruptions in it, have attributed it to the trembling hand of an impostor, is yet perfectly agreeable to the sentiments and design of it's reputed author. Nor could the next section, if consider'd with a view to this, have been more properly introduc'd, than it is at present, after the account of a person, whose whole life was *τι δεινὸν ἔργον Ἰουδαίου*, who is here represented as having been the author of a very strange and singular innovation, as having set himself at the head of a multitude, and as having been publicly condemn'd for so doing; and whose adherents, notwithstanding this, *ἐκ ἐπιούρου*, but had continued

tinued to exert themselves in his behalf to that day.

Thirdly, the silence of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Cyprian, with regard to this passage is urg'd as an objection to it. For these authors having been professedly engag'd in the defence of Christianity against the Jews, it is represented as a thing almost incredible, that they should omit taking notice of such an account of Christ, had it been extant in Josephus when they wrote. But (not to repeat all that has been offer'd at large by several persons in answer to this objection) it will be sufficient briefly to mention the two principal things which have, not improperly, been observ'd with regard to it. First, that if these writers knew any thing of Josephus, they could not be ignorant of the light in which he was consider'd by his own countrymen, and the little authority whatever he might have said upon this occasion, must have had with them. Accordingly they have taken no notice of his account either of St James or of John the Baptist. Secondly, it was quite foreign to their design to have insisted upon this testimony, they having principally confin'd themselves to allegations of Scripture, and reasonings drawn from thence, in their discourses. To which I beg leave to add

add thirdly, that if the paragraph stood in their time as I suppose it to have done, it must have been highly absurd in persons endeavouring to prove Jesus to be the Messiah, to have urg'd in support of this truth a passage which asserts nothing concerning him, but what was then universally allow'd by their Jewish adversaries, and which seems to me plainly to imply that the author of it did not even look upon him as a teacher sent from God.

But whatever construction may be put upon the silence of the above-mention'd authors, it is pretended that Origen is more explicit in the affair, and has in effect told us, that the paragraph in dispute was not extant in his copy of Josephus. For he has observ'd in two places^{*} of his works, that this historian did not acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, in one of which he expressly refers to a passage concerning John the Baptist not above a page or two distant from this which we are concern'd with. Now though I would by no means engage to maintain with Daubuz and others, that Origen may reasonably be suppos'd to have seen this account of Jesus as it is com-

^{*} The reader may see them in the note at the end of this paragraph.

monly read, not only without having taken any notice of it in his answer to Celsus, but even notwithstanding what he has here and elsewhere said with regard to Josephus; yet I am satisfied that this might easily be the case, if he read the paragraph as I conceive it to have been originally written. For what will this account then assert, which Celsus himself (allowing only for the different air of an historian, and that of a scoffing Epicurean disputant) has not expressly granted? Or what is there in it which could give Origen any suspicion that Josephus did believe Jesus to be the Messiah?

1 Not to repeat the well known passages of Celsus, where he admits what is here suppos'd, it may not be amiss to point out the light in which Origen places his Heathen adversary, Συμμεμετρικῶς μὲν καὶ οὐκ ἀνυπόκριτος δυνάμει, ὡς ἱερὸς ἱστορεῖ, ἢ αἷ τοὺς νόμους ἱκανῶς ἀγνοῦν αὐτὸν ὡς Χριστῷ ἀπο-
 Γὰστον ὃ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς ὡς δὲ μὲν γινώσκω, καὶ ὁ τοῦτο δυνάμει μεμαρτυρηται. Contra Cels. L. 1. p. 30. How applicable is this description, allowing only for the difference of characters and circumstances, to the account which I conceive the Jewish historian to have here given us? And if it stood thus when Origen wrote, what reason is there to expect that he should have quoted it against Celsus? Eusebius, who first cites this passage in defence of Christianity, applies it in his *Dem. Evang.* to quite a different purpose, viz. merely to prove what Origen represents his Heathen adversary as having admitted.

2 The two observations of Origen stand thus, Comment. in Matth. c. 13. 55. Τὸ ἰασημένιον ἡμεῖς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἔργῳ ὡς ἀπο-
 Αἰσθητὸν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, ὅπου ἰσχύει &c. And, Contra Cels. L. 1.

The last objection which I shall trouble the reader with, is drawn from it's not being to be

p. 35. καὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους τῶ Ἰησοῦ ὡς Ἰουδαῖοι. From which passages Faber thinks it evident that Origen refers to a place in Josephus, in which he had said something directly against Christ. And indeed it appears to me not improbable, that he does in these passages really allude to some account which Josephus had given of Christ, and which he had so worded as to shew that he himself did not believe in him. But does not this very passage, as I suppose it to have stood, sufficiently shew this? And is there not something in Origen's remarkably *soft* and *negative* manner of expression, which seems to imply that Josephus had contented himself barely with so doing, without directly saying any thing malicious or abusive concerning him? Had it been otherwise, would he not probably have strengthen'd his *opposition* by saying καὶ τοὺς λαλοῦν or βλασφημοῦν? And if so, do not these circumstances upon the whole afford us a fair presumption, that Origen's copy of Josephus did contain an account of Jesus not unlike this which I am contending for?

But there is another passage in Origen, which it may not be improper to consider. Celsus, in the objection, which had given his answerer occasion to mention the great things that Josephus had said of John the Baptist, and (as he thought, but in which he was partly mistaken) of James, addressing himself as it were to Jesus, says, "The only proof you bring of the descent of the Holy Ghost at your baptism, is ὅτι ἐν φῶς, καὶ πᾶσι ἰσχυρῶς [meaning John the Baptist] ἐπέβη τῶν μετὰ σου παρακλησάμενος. p. 38." In answer to which Origen among other things properly remarks, that in making this objection he had quite thrown off his Jewish mask. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐντάλλεται τῶν Ἰουδαίων οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τῶ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῶ τῶ Ἰησοῦ παρακαλεῖται. Now the account which I conceive Josephus to have here given of Christ, compar'd with what he has said of John the Baptist, exactly answers this observation. They appear as two very different persons that have not the least connexion with each other. John the Baptist is quite a favourite

met with in Photius's collections. But that a paragraph of an author, not only extant in the Greek copies and ancient Latin version of his works, but quoted likewise by writers of the fourth, fifth, and succeeding centuries, should be in the least degree suspected, because it is not to be found at present in the remains of an indigested common-place book (great part of which is evidently lost¹) of a collector of the ninth century, who without any order has minuted down different passages of the same authors in different places, seems to me to

favourite with our author, a just and holy man, and a zealous preacher of virtue and religion. His death is the barbarous effect of Herod's jealousy, disapprov'd by the Jews, and sufficient in the opinion of some of them to call down the vengeance of heaven upon his murderer. On the other hand, Jesus is describ'd, not as bearing the least relation to the former, but as standing entirely upon his own foundation. No regard is paid to the singular holiness and purity of his life; and a disadvantageous representation is given of his doctrine. He is merely an object of surprize and astonishment, which the notoriety of his amazing works, the singular nature of his system, and the number and steadiness of his followers, necessarily render'd him. And the death of this extraordinary person is not, as in the former case, the effect of any irregular or unjust proceeding, but tacitly approv'd by our historian, as owing, says he, to the determination τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἡγῶν, *of the principal men of our nation*. Whether any consequence may fairly be drawn from the exact conformity of these two accounts to the Jewish notion above-mention'd, the reader must determine.

¹ See Cave's *Script. Eccles. Hist. Lit.* v. 2. p. 48.

be a way of reasoning too extraordinary to deserve a serious confutation. And if any one thinks otherwise, he may see this and two other circumstances with regard to Photius fully handled in the collection of Epistles¹ and what Huetius, Daubuz, and others have written upon this subject.

Upon the whole, it appears to me, that, if the two slight and easy emendations here propos'd, may be admitted, this paragraph may fairly be esteem'd genuine. Since there will be good positive evidence on the one hand, without any thing of real moment to oppose to it on the other. And so far will the account itself be from carrying, as has often been imagin'd, it's own confutation with it, that there are in it several circumstances, which seem to speak strongly in it's favour. Such for instance are, the detach'd point of view in which Jesus appears; the visible inclination of the author to ascribe every thing wonderful in him to mere human art or *αφία*, though contrary, as it were, to his own conviction, that there must have been something more than human in him; the lessening and ambiguous description of his miracles, and silence with regard to the great variety and extraor-

¹ Publish'd by Christ. Arnold, Norimb. 1661.

dinary nature of them; the character given of his doctrines as being *אֲדָרָה*, foreign and opposite to those of the Jewish religion; the light in which his crucifixion is represented; the artful insinuation by which he endeavours to weaken the evidence for his resurrection, without attempting to disprove it; the wonder which he seems to intimate at the continuance of this sect; and in short, the whole air of this relation, which is in no other respect Christian, than as it necessarily pays an involuntary acknowledgment to the notoriety of some of the principal facts, which are the support of our most holy religion.

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